



**HORNE**



# REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE ENERGY OFFICIALS (NASEO)

IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS FOR

**Home Energy Performance-Based Whole-House Rebate Program (HOMES)**

**High-Efficiency Electric Home Rebate Program (HEEHR)**



MAY 19, 2023



# PROGRAM ELEMENTS



#16

## Contact Information

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**HORNE**

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## Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Overview

HORNE is a firm rooted in people, driven by growth, and committed to consistency. We stand solidly on a foundation that values our team members and champions inclusion and helping our team reach their full potential. Not only in our culture, but in the programs we administer – HORNE is dedicated to the participation and access of citizens in underserved communities. Our online platforms are ADA compliant and offer application intake through various formats (online, over the phone, and in person). We also engage and work through local community agencies to leverage existing relationships.

Through spatial analysis, we assess demographic indicators to reach different groups of people based on the priority and need of the program or state. We can use these assessments to develop the state’s approach to reaching underserved communities. We also can determine outreach based on energy burden or energy outage data.

Depending on the **needs and priorities of the state**, we utilize numerous strategies to ensure an equitable program across each state.

#18

## HORNE’s Experience

HORNE is a nationally recognized professional services firm with a broad depth of federal grant administration experience. Our experience includes planning and administering large portfolios of programs, deploying rapidly while ensuring compliance, and focusing on equity for vulnerable and underserved populations.

Assisting communities in  
**17**  
**STATES & U.S. TERRITORIES**

Managed over  
**\$108**  
**BILLION**  
**FEDERAL AWARDS**

Assisted with more than  
**3.5**  
**MILLION**  
**LMI ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATIONS**


To learn about HORNE’s experience implementing federal and state programs benefiting the low- and moderate-income (LMI) and affordable home energy upgrades within disadvantages communities, visit our [link here](#) or contact us directly.

## #19 Program Elements

Based on our 17 years of providing turn-key program implementation solutions for states, we know there are several key areas states should consider in their program design.

**These operational elements include program and plan design; vendor onboarding and management; marketing and outreach; call center; eligibility determination and quality assurance; and system solution and rebate processing.** Our recent [Whitepaper](#) also details potential scope items for each program element described below.

**HORNE has the expertise and capacity to assist states in each program element.**



**HORNE’s significant experience in these elements and our determination to consistently evolve and improve sets our solution apart.**

→ To learn more about our experience with these elements, [see our response to Category 3.](#)



### Program and Plan Design

Pressure will continue to rise from external stakeholders to launch the programs. States should consider a program and plan design that accomplishes their goals and can be implemented quickly and compliantly.



### Vendor Onboarding and Management

States need to manage a large network of external vendors – from suppliers to contractors. They should consider the timing of vendor onboarding to allow for a seamless applicant experience from day one. Cultivating strong relationships with the vendor network is key to a successful program. Prior to program launch, states should establish a strong network of external vendors who have completed the enrollment process, which can continue throughout the life of the program.



### Marketing and Outreach

Marketing and outreach will be a priority during the pre-launch phase of the program to build a healthy pipeline and to reach applicants in the underserved communities prior to the application opening. A centralized marketing and outreach approach allows for a consistent message. States should consider outreach toolkits, created at the state level and provided to community groups, to help spread the word at the local level. A public website with information including program information, eligibility requirements, program status, frequently asked questions, and various toolkits is key to a successful program.

**Centralized solutions help residents authenticate the program and trust the process.**




### Call Center

A full-scale call center to assist applicants and stakeholders with questions is needed quickly. The call center should be **equipped to handle items such as:**

- ★ Applicant and vendor questions
- ★ Application intake
- ★ Assistance to applicants with disabilities
- ★ Assistance in multiple languages
- ★ Skill-based queues to support and prioritize calls
- ★ Interactive Voice Response system with program rebate menus.



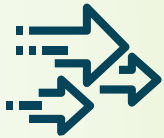
### Eligibility Determinations and Quality Assurance

We expect states will experience a high volume of applications and touchpoints. States should have the reporting and tools necessary to manage a large pipeline of applications. Income determinations will be a necessary component of eligibility. States need to evaluate partners based on their experience in both income determinations and communications with underserved communities - at high volumes and scale. Policies and procedures should mitigate fraud throughout each stage of the process.



### System and Rebate Processing

States should consider an end-to-end solution – leaning heavily on innovative ways to reduce applicant burden and decrease documentation needs, as well as a system focused on compliance. A streamlined point-of-sale process and ability to reduce fraud and duplication should also be a top priority.



Our experience preparing and launching **full turn-key efforts** brings you peace of mind – we have faced these same challenges on other programs and bring the assurance that we can launch quickly and deploy best practices for your rebate programs.

## #21 RFP and Contract Language

The items listed in our recent [Whitepaper](#) include known requirements and information from our 17 years of implementing federally funded programs. When additional guidance becomes available, states will need to consider the impact to the program implementation and future scope. Items noted within the Whitepaper are merely examples. States will need specific performance metrics to determine pricing and staffing and to manage contract expectations. States could consider a task order style procurement for the various stages of the programs. This approach would allow states to gain efficiency in the procurement process and mitigate risk of entering long-term contracts prior to the Department of Energy distributing funds to states.

**HOME ENERGY REBATE PROGRAMS**  
PROGRAM CONSIDERATIONS  
UPDATED MAY 15, 2023

**Background**

Congress appropriated **\$8.8 billion for the Home Energy Rebate Programs** (the "Programs") through the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), Pub. L. 117-169 (August 16, 2022). The Programs will be implemented by State Energy Offices and consist of two sections – Section 50121 Home Efficiency Rebates and Section 50122 Home Electrification and Appliance Rebates.

Department of Energy ("DOE") is responsible to provide guidance and oversight for the Programs. State allocations have been determined and posted [here](#). DOE released the first Administrative and Legal Requirements Document ("ALRD") on March 23, 2023. The [ALRD](#) provided initial guidance to the states and allows access to a portion of the planning, administration and technical assistance funds from their allocation. These funds are known as Early Administrative Funds ("EAF"), which HORNE has [summarized here](#). State's EAF allocations were recently [updated](#).

The legislation mandates general expectations for the funds, which states must consider as they design and implement the Programs. This document is intended to summarize the program requirements known at this time, as well as provide states with additional considerations for program design and scope. Additional guidance is expected from DOE in the coming months.

HOME ENERGY REBATE PROGRAMS	
1	Program requirements for states. <i>"At minimum, a [redacted] will need to include information regarding [redacted]"</i>
2	Ensuring the reductions in home energy efficiency retrofit that are calibrated (P.2400), for purposes of modeled [redacted]
3	Weatherization software, as approved by the [redacted] and hourly (if available) weather-implementation of a home energy [redacted] or home rebates;
4	Energy emissions;
5	Energy efficiency retrofit for which a rebate is [redacted]
6	Third party to the homeowner; and materials installed, and the projected rate valuation of the retrofit;
7	Designator for eligible retrofits carried out in a [redacted]
8	States that receive a federal rebate for the same single [redacted] as any other Federal grant or rebate [redacted] rebate;
9	States that do not receive a federal rebate in excess [redacted]
10	Determine whether a project qualifies for the elevated refund amounts available to households below 80% AMI.*

Scan the QR code to see HORNE's Whitepaper on Home Energy Rebate Programs or head to <https://qrco.de/bdytcq>



# INDICATION OF VENDOR INTEREST



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## #25 Company Summary

HORNE offers a menu of refined services we have honed deploying applicant relief solutions across the country. **Our turn-key solution includes program and plan design; vendor onboarding and management; marketing and outreach; call center; eligibility determination and quality assurance; and system solution and rebate processing.** We understand each state has unique needs and we can offer services as a standalone or within a full-scale approach.

**PROVEN TURN-KEY SOLUTIONS**

Our experience preparing and launching turn-key efforts brings you peace of mind because we have faced these same challenges on other programs and can launch quickly and deploy best practices.



### Program and Plan Design

HORNE has extensive experience developing federal program implementation plans. Working in partnership with states, we bring best practices and practical program concepts to expedite the delivery of assistance. It's one thing to plan, it's another to take a plan to execution. We believe that's what sets us apart.

**HORNE is focused on results with our clients and sharing our lessons learned implementing large-scale federally funded programs.**



### Vendor Onboarding and Management

Successful vendor management is critical for the programs. HORNE offers a comprehensive vendor management solution, including vendor specific technology, vendor enrollment, and ongoing vendor management throughout the life of the program. Our team has **managed over 6,000 vendors and contractors** across our portfolios.



### Marketing and Outreach

Our team focuses on marketing and outreach to underserved communities. **With our experience administering programs benefiting LMI communities, we know where to start on DAY ONE** to ensure a state's marketing and outreach campaign is thorough and inclusive, while also engaging community partners to reach each part of the state and provide local presence.



### Call Center

We provide oversight, management, training, and staffing for call center operations. HORNE has **provided call centers for 19 programs** and **handled over 20 million calls.**



### Eligibility Determinations and Quality Assurance

HORNE has **provided eligibility determinations for over three million applications** – which include income eligibility for LMI households. Our team has utilized multiple avenues for income determinations (e.g., categorical eligibility, income attestation, and census tract validation) and we understand the importance of applicant communication – especially those in underserved communities.



### System and Rebate Processing

Our experience in creating and implementing federally compliant technology solutions allows us to quickly position a solution to support the programs. Our solution includes both an applicant and vendor portal for a seamless customer experience, as well as a payment option to facilitate point-of-sale rebates. Our system solution is designed with two main things in mind:

- 1) applicant/vendor experience
- 2) flexibility to adapt to changing guidance.

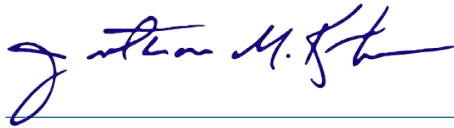
**HORNE has disbursed over \$15 billion in federal and state funding and will deploy those best practices for the programs.**

## Confirmation Statement

*HORNE LLP authorizes NASEO to publish and distribute this response to the NASEO RFI on its website and through other means to the states and general public. We have included no confidential or proprietary information in our response.*

Jonathan Krebs, CFA, CGFM, Managing Partner, *Government Services*

*Authorized Representative's Name*



*Signature*

May 19, 2023

*Date*





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[HORNE.COM](http://HORNE.COM)

